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Editorial

WE cannot here embark upon a comprehensive or detailed discussion of the Education Bill. It might be supposed that everything that can possibly be said about the proposals which it contains has already been said, and that the journals, Christian and otherwise, which have education as their special province have adequately canvassed the subject. We have, however, found that, in this as in many other matters at present, those persons who are best qualified to form a judgment are least disposed to express a definite or confident judgment. This is probably because they are more keenly aware than others of the intellectual confusion, the moral uncertainty, and the spiritual waste-land of our society. These conditions place a grave question-mark over what can be expected from the most admirable scheme of educational reform. No one knows how long they will continue, or whether the forces that dispel them will be good or evil.

The fact that the proximate, as well as the remote, future of our society is in such large measure incalculable must be accepted as the will of God. It is a sign to us that He is the Lord of history, and that we are not the masters of our fate. He calls upon us to serve Him not as men who have the whole situation in hand or a complete understanding of it in our heads, but as men who in the darkest hour and in the most obscure concourse of events are confident that He will give us sufficient light to see where our duty lies. Under this perspective it seems to us that certain things, both negative and positive, can be said about the Education Bill, which ought to command the general assent of Christian people.

First, the present reforms, if they are carried into effect as well as entered on the Statute Book, will not constitute a final or permanent solution of the problem of national education. They will not constitute a solution even for a generation, as some affect to anticipate. There can be no solution at all until the nation acquires a surer faith as to the purpose of human existence and as to its own calling in particular. Our national system of education grew up piecemeal and experimentally. It has been determined by no plain philosophy of education; there has been no agreement as to what education is for—whether to train people for jobs, or to form character, or to hand on a national tradition and, if so, what tradition. Nor can there be such agreement until there is a common faith from which it can be derived.

But, secondly, we are not to wait in an attitude of suspense and indecision until a common faith emerges. A philosophy of education, for instance, will not descend from the skies; it will be wrought out as men, who are engaged in the actual business of educating, ask the right questions about the tasks in which they are engaged. The present

educational reforms are to be accepted as opening up fresh tasks and opportunities, as a next step that follows from the way in which our national system has so far developed, and as the best possible compromise that can be achieved between the various and conflicting interests that are involved. They also fairly reflect the vague moral aspiration and the religious confusion that prevail in our society, and on this ground also can be accepted as propounding a problem though not as defining a creed. Christians should therefore resolve to work the reforms wholeheartedly and with a good conscience, in those respects where they evidently will make for greater efficiency and for a wider social justice, but provocatively and with an uneasy conscience, in those respects where they leave open and unresolved the great questions about a common faith and a national vocation. Accepting what is thus given as the will of God, we must go on to press these questions upon ourselves and to raise them as a public issue at every point where the actual task in hand propounds them. There can be no settlement of our educational system until there is a new religious settlement in this country; it looks as though it will be long before that is reached, but until it is reached Christians are bound themselves to be ill at ease, and to be a source of discord and friction in the community.

Thirdly, we should forbid all talk which encourages the notion that there can be a Christian education except in a Christian society. The insertion of the most rigid denominational instruction in a school syllabus is of little avail when it is unrelated to the purpose of the educational system and when it is in contrast to the ethos and aspirations that prevail in the community. Some of the warnings that have been uttered by churchmen about the dangers of "agreed syllabus religion"[1] are warranted, but instead of blaming the government or other sections of the community the Christians should blame themselves for their lack of unity in faith and order, and for their failure at earlier stages to influence the development of the whole educational system constructively. The dangers inherent in a national or undenominational form of Christianity cannot be fought effectively on paper or in parliament; they are to be fought by believing parents and teachers in the homes and in the schools, and by the clergy in the parishes.

Lastly, the proposal in the Report on Training for the Ministry that ordinands shall in future be trained in the art of teaching is seen to have a special importance in this context. But the future is dark indeed unless parents are also being trained to bring up their children in Christian homes, and unless the Church is directing its resources to the equipment of teachers who are aflame with faith, who are firmly grounded in Scriptural doctrine, and who understand the opportunities which the present educational system gives them and the limitations which it imposes on them.

[1] See, for example, Reginald Lumb, *Beyond the White Paper*, Dacre Press, 3s. 6d.

Mr Austin Farrer's Metaphysics of Theism

"No system would ever have been framed," wrote Santayana, "if people had been simply interested in knowing what is true, whatever it may be. What produces systems is the interest in maintaining against all comers that some favourite or inherited idea of ours is sufficient and right." There is an empirical temper of mind (and it can be a healthy one) that is suspicious of metaphysics long before its suspicions are fortified by any doctrine of empiricism. But nowadays, of course, and for several decades, though there may be disagreement over where the body really is to be found, respectable philosophers take it for granted that metaphysical philosophy is cold in its grave, and the only query is how such an activity of the mythopœic imagination could have beguiled so many and for so long.

In its antimetaphysical aggressiveness, however, the phenomenalism of to-day and yesterday is heir to a tradition that is indeed much older than Hume or Kant but has been shaped by Kant and dignified by post-Kantian idealism itself—a body of doctrines which on close scrutiny betrays some astonishing resemblances to contemporary positivism. Traditional metaphysics, then, metaphysics of an Aristotelian mould, is a corpse not only cold, it would appear, but rotten.

But not all philosophers, thank heaven, are respectable, and even in modern times the traditional metaphysics of "the Schools" has never lacked advocates. These advocates may roughly be put into one of two classes. There are those who might be termed exegetical: they are thinkers indeed and not gramophones, yet on the whole are content to hand on the old arguments of St Thomas Aquinas in a garb more pleasing to a modern eye and with the emphases on topics particularly relevant at the time of writing. Without disparagement to these, the others may be called philosophical: they think through the old doctrines afresh in the light of subsequent insights, and what they write is something both old and new. As examples we may quote Rousselot and Maréchal and their numerous disciples in France and Belgium.

This is a lengthy preamble to an all too short notice of a book that is of great value and deserves a detailed examination.[1] But to point contrasts may help a reader to see Mr Farrer's work for what it is in itself and may disarm two sorts of suspicions. The author is as empirical in temper as anyone could wish and is well acquainted with philosophy, Kantian and modern, Cartesian and Berkeleian; and while his argument is radically thomistic, it is not exegetical or a serving of a twice-cooked dish. It is philosophical to a degree—yet nothing could be less "neo-scholastic." This remark may call for explanation, but it introduces us, I think, to what is central in Mr Farrer's metaphysical outlook.

In a very remarkable and shrewd essay, entitled *God and Philosophy* (Yale University Press, 1941), M. Etienne Gilson has argued that any philosophy that would do justice to what God declared Himself to be

[1] *Finite and Infinite: A Philosophical Essay*, by Austin Farrer, Dacre Press, 20s.

—I am who am—must needs be *existential* in its ontology and not *essential*. "Why, St Thomas asks, do we say that *Qui est* is the most proper name among all those that can be given to God? And his answer is because it signifies 'to be,' *ipsum esse*. But what is it to be? . . . The word 'being,' as a noun, designates some substance; the word 'to be'—or *esse*—is a verb, because it designates an act. To understand this is also to reach, beyond the level of essence, the deeper level of existence." It is M. Gilson's opinion, as an historian of philosophy, that this metaphysical insight is extremely difficult either to reach—St Augustine did not reach it, his philosophy being still too near the Greeks—or to maintain—it was lost to view soon after Aquinas. The reason is, on his diagnosis, that "the mind feels at home in a world of things, whose essences and laws it can grasp and define in terms of concepts; but shy and ill at ease in a world of existences, because to exist is an act, not a thing."

These are the principles which led M. Gilson in an earlier book to trounce very merrily and provocatively such a distinguished philosophical exponent of traditional doctrine (to use the distinction I drew earlier) as Fr Maréchal. But to such criticism Mr Farrer is not at all vulnerable. His book, it seems to me, is both extremely traditional and extremely "philosophical" precisely because its metaphysics is through and through an existential metaphysics. Herein, perhaps, lies its greatest originality, for with a wealth of fresh insight the old problems of analogy and the cosmological *schema* are thought out again in the context of the immanent activity of finite selves.

The existential character of Mr Farrer's careful and impressive argument has another very considerable virtue. Outside scholastic circles most recent natural theology, it is perhaps not too much to say, has been of a Kantian and Idealistic flavour, and has presupposed the habitual reduction of the notion of substance to the notion of subject. But from any presuppositions such as these Mr Farrer breaks away, and that without a single nostalgic backward glance.

Perhaps it is no exaggeration to commend *Finite and Infinite* as the finest contribution to natural theology that has appeared for many a long year. Quite certainly those who have learned of the cosmological argument from writings like Professor John Laird's *Theism and Cosmology* should make an attempt to relearn it in the light of this book. But the attempt must be a determined one. "Perhaps" marked a reservation about the importance of Mr Farrer's work; and with reason. To read him through and to follow his argument in all its parts and complications and its coherence demands an effort of close and patient attention such as very few philosophical books demand. It is a thousand pities that such a book should be written not well and constructed very badly; that a grand argument should appear at times to be struggling like Laocoon in the coils of an enigmatic presentation. Mr Farrer himself always knows very well what he wants to say, and his writing is not confused in the ordinary sense of that word. But it is sometimes diffuse and sometimes elliptical, sometimes so allusive as to be cryptic, sometimes so congested that the pursuit of the thought leaves a reader broken-winded. Moreover, transitions are not well

managed, and the reader may plod or may caper, but quite often he will have lost his bearings.

The faults of construction and of presentation are serious. Yet the substance is so good as to be worth straining every nerve to discover and track out. The book is set against the background of contemporary preoccupations and Mr Farrer gives much attention to Logical Positivists. Perhaps, indeed, too much court is paid them at the expense of orderliness of exposition, and perhaps again there is an occasional too ready deference to modern opinion: as when the Causal Argument is brusquely nonsuited on the ground that, even if we do not take a nominalist view of physical causality, yet "the demand for a First Cause is a demand for an instance of the genus 'cause,' and the activity of God being unique is at best an analogy to that genus, but not an instance of it." This judgment is a trifle abrupt, true though it may turn out to be in the context of the rest of the argument. Similarly, one would have liked some discussion of what it is that constitutes a metaphysical proof, before it is magisterially said that in metaphysics a demonstration proper is impossible. Yet no doubt Mr Farrer does well to be tactful, for deference to the authority of Hume (the Old 'Un, as even Professor Broad once called him) is still almost *de rigueur*.

The plan of the essay is roughly as follows. The first part is devoted to "analysis"—that is, to the discovery and exhibition and clarification of the presuppositions of theistic metaphysics; during this investigation they are entertained as an hypothesis and no argument is made for their justification. These presuppositions are chiefly two: (1) the "cosmological idea" (God is the Creator of all things and is Absolute—*i.e.*, the perfect existent); (2) the validity of knowledge by analogy (for God is related to finite existents in an ontological relation that is unique). In this part the discussion of analogy is excellent; it is careful and detailed and of wide range, and has, therefore, two outstanding merits: it does not march along in seven-league boots, a habit too common in many writers on this subject, and it does attempt to explore the ramifications of analogy in philosophical and other thinking.

We know what it is like to be a cause, declared Bishop Berkeley, and here, too, the requisite analogies are sought in the nature of finite substances or agents—*e.g.*, selves.

Hence in the second part of his work, Dialectic, the author proceeds to validate the theistic hypothesis by a reasoned defence of a doctrine of finite substance. This discussion takes up 200 pages, two-thirds of the book, and is the most ambitious enterprise of the author. But for contemporaries, of course, it has to be done at length, since "the doctrine of substance . . . supplies the whole material with which rational theology works and the foundation on which it builds." There is no space, even were it possible, to summarize this long argument, valuable though it is—but perhaps it is not inopportune to remind the reader again that here we have philosophy in its shirt-sleeves, and that the discussion winds and swerves and returns. Lest, however, I have been too severe on Mr Farrer's failings in architectural power, may I in fairness quote a passage at length to show the difficulties with which he has to grapple in the attempt both to argue a case on its

own merits and also to keep the sympathy of a modern philosophical reader?

> In some ways the logical problem, "How are significant propositions about substantial being possible?" is best treated after the examples have been given; for the possibility of a certain type of significant statement follows, like other possibilities, from the actual occurrence of the thing in question. All we can do is to describe it clearly and define its relation to other types of statement or—should we say?—statements about other types of things. And yet, if we do not begin from the logical end, we are in danger of being counted out all along for talking nonsense, and so we will begin from logic, though this will in fact involve a description of the metaphysical facts from a certain angle, and with a certain type of interest: a description which will require the fuller account of finite substance to support it; and this shall duly follow.

The doctrine of finite substance is discussed, then, on the ground of the active self, considered especially in the unity of the act of will. The choice of this terrain has a second advantage, in that "activity or existence forms, we have suspected, an analogic scale of modes, and we must look for the mode, and the instance of that mode most known to us, before we can hope to widen our acquaintance."

Now an act is not an object nor a relation between objects, and it is found that to understand the unity of a single act of will is the clue to the understanding of the self, for "it is the substantial connexion provided by activity as such and studied under the name of will, which holds together the self as well as the act." All this second part of Mr Farrer's argument is descriptive: it exhibits a coexistence of elements merely; the question: Why such a coexistence? is not asked. But in his third part (and it is stiffer reading still), the "dialectic of rational theology," the author invokes what has been argued about analogy in the first part and attempts to show that such a coexistence of elements is intelligible only if God exists as the ground of such a coexistence. There is here, of course, a metaphysical leap of the mind: "it is only because we in fact see the finite coexistence as the splintered image of God's existence that we regard the finite elements as not merely coexistence (which would be a fact demanding no explanation) but composite (and therefore requiring in the simple a ground for their composition)."

But is there "of course" such a leap of the mind, what Mr Farrer calls a violent jump in the middle? It is certainly a consistent and fundamental opinion of his that there is. We may agree that, in one sense of inference, the existence of God cannot be reached by inference but only by dialectical argument.[1] But it is another matter to hold such a view of legitimate theistic procedure as commits one to the declaration that "the premise of St Thomas's *Via Prima* is not 'constat quaedam moveri in hoc mundo' but is the habit men have of reading into the system of events an absolute agency which can find its ultimate in God alone"—a verdict that would certainly, I think, astonish St Thomas. Such, however, is Mr Farrer's view: it is implicit, for instance, in his criticism of Descartes, and is the reason why his whole argument

[1] *Cp.* Maréchal's reply to M. Le Roy in the *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* for March, 1931, or Jolivet's paper in the *Archives de Philosophie*, viii, 2.

turns on the existence of degrees of existence and activity. But I doubt it. However, it would be impudence to make a show of illuminating a topic so complicated as this in a sentence or two, and I shall content myself with referring the curious reader to the voluminous material to be found up and down the two enormous tomes of Descoqs's *Praelectiones Theologiae Naturalis* (Beauchesne, 1932 and 1935).

However this may be, Mr Farrer lets us off very little and at this stage of his book the longsuffering reader may well be inclined to cry that common opinion is always right and *der Metaphysiker* a man who talks in riddles or worse. Yet it is quite often more comfortable, as Newman has it, to suppose a book to be absurd than one's self to be dull, and I would compare this attempt of Mr Farrer with the program laid down by Gilson, a man brought up in a very different intellectual climate. It is hard, he says, to understand that "I am" is an active verb, and still harder "to see that 'it is' ultimately points out, not that which the thing is, but the primitive existential act which causes it both to be and to be precisely that which it is. He who begins to see this, however, also begins to grasp the very stuff our universe is made of. He even begins obscurely to perceive the supreme cause of such a world."

Correspondingly, having classified his restatement of the theme of the *Quinque Viae* into usiological and anthropological arguments (those which find their basis in finite nature in general and those which find it in the particular nature of man), Mr Farrer observes that both are essential and complementary: "without anthropology we should not start, and without usiology we should not arrive." And why should we not arrive? For the same reason that within usiology arguments from substantial relations presuppose the principle of arguments from the finitude of finite being—namely, the distinction of essence and existence or of activity and its modes. For "to see the significance of the distinction is to see the possibility of the divine nature—*i.e.*, of that in which existence is not limited by an essence, but is its own essence. To admit the significance of the question 'Why is it so?' is to admit that existence limited by essence, when essence not so limited is possible, requires explanation; and the answer 'Because God made it so' finds the explanation where alone it can be sought, in the activity of an unlimited existence."

Of course, the conclusion of all this effort, as Mr Farrer recognizes with St Thomas and all serious philosophical theologians, is a knowledge that amounts to little. But that is not to the point; what matters most is not the richness of the conclusion but its truth and the insights achieved on the journey—to say nothing of the defence of the reasonableness of theology. The journey, to repeat, is steep and craggy; and inevitably so. But how good it is to find a philosopher who will have nothing to do with "philosophy of religion" in so far as such a philosophy centres metaphysics on the act of thought ("God is not usefully defined as whatever man concerns himself with in an activity of a certain type, called religion"); and how very good to find a man metaphysically tough enough to say of the Moral Argument that it is more notorious than it ought to be, on account of the decay of metaphysics.

But if the book is tough it is not for all its severity jejune. Throughout, indeed, you will find many a shrewd passage, now about positivism, now about moral choice and freedom, or a happy remark (so welcome in contemporary English philosophy) such as that "those who wish to confine philosophers to plain and proper terms offend against the very form of thought, by which no term is what it is without its fringe." But more than this, to one versed in the literature of rational theology this book is full of resonances: with the reservations made above, the central position it gives to the distinction of essence and existence and the doctrine of the limitation of existence by essence marks it as thomist *pur sang*, and through its emphasis on existentiality and activity more thoroughbred than the work of not a few modern disciples of Aquinas; yet being this it is something else as well: there are resonances, for instance, I think, of Maurice Blondel and his doctrine of "dynamism" —witness the comment that man is not a simple monad, but that God-relatedness is of the constitution of human nature, "giving rise to the polarity of aspiration." Finally, the book is fresh and original and contemporary, both old and new.

This short article, I fear, may prove as crepuscular in the reading as *Finite and Infinite* itself. But let that be taken as a measure of the book's worth. For when you have an argument that is sustained and tight and not linear but dialectical, proceeding from a multiplicity to that whose apprehension makes such a multiplicity intelligible, when, moreover, that argument is conducted without naivety but with a responsive awareness of its philosophical critics ancient and modern, then it is a caricature to simplify, and idle slickly to list reasonings and conclusions. Reasonings and conclusions are often intelligible only after the road to them has been traversed on foot; in philosophy and in theology there are no taxicabs.

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Man and Literature

It is never easy to trace the development of an idea or ideas. If they are discussed in connexion with one particular person only, the task may be fairly simple; especially if they are stated clearly and carefully. But it is comparatively rare to find them expressed thus. It is obvious, then, that it will be harder still to discuss "assumptions" as distinct from clearly formulated "ideas," for these "assumptions" are almost always indirectly expressed and reveal not so much the thoughts which are consciously held as the beliefs which are taken for granted and accepted uncritically. They are accepted as part of the thought common to the society in which one lives. That these assumptions change is undeniable; and one of the most interesting developments of the last thirty or forty years has been the way in which some of these fundamental beliefs have altered.

Two of the main questions of to-day are: What is Man? and what

should be the nature of the world in which he is meant to live? At the end of the nineteenth century there was no difficulty about the first question. It was assumed that Man was the master of his destiny. This notion, combined with that of the "inevitability of progress," led to the generally accepted view that the social Utopia was just round the corner. But since that time these general assumptions in regard to Man's nature and destiny have changed. The old confidence has gone. To what extent they have changed is not easy to estimate; but the books, plays, and poetry produced in these intervening years provide quite a substantial amount of evidence which has been admirably summed up for us in Mr Norman Nicholson's *Man and Literature* (S.C.M. Press, 10s. 6d.).

Mr Nicholson is to be congratulated on producing a book which is both readable and easily understood. No one need fear that he will not understand what the book is about, or that the author is writing for the few who are "in the know." *Man and Literature* can be followed and enjoyed both by those who are familiar with the general trend of Christian discrimination in things literary and those who aren't. For the former, it will take its place in the line of criticism which began with T. E. Hulme's *Speculations* and was continued in Mr Eliot's *After Strange Gods*. One of the advantages of Mr Nicholson's book is that it is concerned with three quite specific ideas which correspond to his three-fold division—namely, Liberal, Natural, and Imperfect Man. The author has made this division in order to summarize and explain the general notions as to the nature of Man which have taken place from the end of the nineteenth century down to the present day.

The fundamentals of the Christian faith are necessary for a true understanding of Man, and when these fundamentals are ignored or rejected Man's nature and destiny are misunderstood. This is what happened in the case of those who held the Liberal view of Man; they rejected the traditional belief in Man's Fall and Redemption. Though it is naturally beyond the scope of this book to trace the origin of the cleavage between dogma and morality, it is seen as part of the fruits of the Renaissance and as part of that general development of thought which reached its climax in the idea of the Perfectibility of Man and the Inevitability of Progress. It is clearly seen in the work of Shaw, Wells, Galsworthy, and Bennett. The fact that this idea runs through the works of different authors only goes to prove the strength of the generally accepted view. Moreover, it is not confined to literature. It was part of the mental furniture of the age. There are few now who would dispute this statement. But what may not be generally realized is its *result*—the fact that those who maintained a belief in the natural goodness of Man found that their observation contradicted it. It simply was not true to the facts of human experience, and the confusion caused by this contradiction accounts very largely for the pessimism both of Housman and Hardy.

The believers in the Liberal and Natural view of Man had much in common; for both groups denied the doctrine of Original Sin. But there was a difference between them, and this difference is probably, though not necessarily, due to an attempt to account for the contra-

diction between observation and belief mentioned in the previous paragraph. Their attempt may have been a conscious one, or it may have been unconscious. But whichever it was, those who held to the view of Natural Man, and to this group belong Lawrence, Hemingway, and Huxley, did believe in a Fall in *society*. Hence their revolt against society and all that civilization stands for, and the effort to return to a state of innocence supposed to characterize Man before the Fall. "The cult of the primitive" became the prevailing fashion; and it goes a long way towards explaining Lawrence's attempts to de-Europeanize himself and his interest in the Dark Gods of Mexico, Huxley's satire on society in *Brave New World*, and Hemingway's love for bull-fighting and the Spanish matadors portrayed in *Death in the Afternoon*. So much has been written about Lawrence that it is unnecessary to dwell on him here, but the author rightly points out that he did not reject spiritual values altogether. What was of real value in Lawrence stands out clearly when he is compared with another believer in Natural Man—Henri de Montherlant. For the latter, Man is simply brute beast and exists only to fulfil his natural desires.

Of the three sections of *Man and Literature*, most readers may find that the last one, which deals with the subject of Imperfect Man, is the most helpful. Some modern authors are said to be "difficult" because of their style and technique. Mr Nicholson deals with this problem and helps us to understand not only what they are saying but *why* they say certain things in a certain way. His explanation both of substance and technique is highly commendable.

In dealing with Imperfect Man yet another change is noted. Man is no longer regarded as a creature of natural goodness, but as sinful. It is pointed out that though this belief is consistent with Christianity yet it is not the whole of it, because, with one or two notable exceptions, the connexion between Sin and Redemption is nowhere clearly implied. But even so, there is in a real sense a "return to orthodoxy," and this is the more remarkable in that many of those who hold to the view of Imperfect Man are not professing Christians, nor do they necessarily see the significance of the view they hold. Of those who are discussed in this last section, due place is given to Eliot and Joyce as the two most influential writers "who combined the traditional view of the nature of Man with a gift for technical experiment, and who have had great influence on the younger writers." The author comes down on the side of Joyce (the blasphemies of *Ulysses* and elsewhere are not condoned, they are incidental to the main work), and states that Joyce never was able to escape from the influences of Catholicism and that "it was to Catholic teaching that he turned to find a structure for his picture of life." Whatever Joyce's reaction to Catholicism may have been, he believed that Man was a sinful creature, and if he did nothing else at least he was instrumental in helping to reinstate the traditional view of Man and human nature which had been practically ignored by those who held to the belief in Liberal and Natural Man. The influence both of Joyce and Eliot has not yet been fully estimated; but the interesting thing is that a later generation has found in them something essential which the believers in Liberal and Natural Man could not supply, and

that "something" is a realistic view of Man which will not admit of an easy optimism in regard to human nature or human society.

A good deal of space is devoted to Franz Kafka, and his three novels, *The Trial*, *America*, and *The Castle* are discussed at some length. Mr Nicholson sees in Kafka the ". . . first great novelist of the modern age who expressed the full Christian conception of Man as a creature fallen by his own fault and redeemed by grace not his own." Both *The Castle* and *The Trial* are religious allegories concerned, in the first instance, with Divine Grace, and in the second with Divine Justice. Kafka is compared with Bunyan and *The Castle* with *Pilgrim's Progress*; while Kierkegaard's influence is clearly revealed. Kafka shows all the complications which beset the individual in his relationship to society: the seeming futility of human effort, and the need to submit to Divine grace in obedience and humility. It is probably true, as we are told, that Kafka overemphasized the consciousness of guilt in Man, and this was no doubt due to his own psychological and spiritual make-up. But the important point is Kafka's influence on other writers and the fact that his novels "show a more dignified, because a truer, picture of the human situation, of the position of Man in relation to God and death and judgement, than is to be found anywhere else in modern fiction."

The chapter on modern poets ought not to be missed, though it is somewhat sketchy. Those who find Mr Eliot's poetry an enigma will be helped by the author's comments on "The Waste Land" and the *Burnt Norton* series. Discussing the poets who followed Eliot, Mr Nicholson notes a definite change in the ideas of some of them. W. H. Auden is typical of the more important of this group. He is no longer the semi-Marxist looking to the reform of society as the panacea for all ills. Political thought and action have their place, but "Auden has now seen that political problems have roots deeper than the level of society, that good intentions and well-planned politics go wrong, because there is some unsolved problem in the human heart." Most people—

> . . . know
> Instinctively what ought to be
> The nature of society
> And how they'd live there if they could,
> If it were easy to be good.

And this brings us back to the problem of Grace and Free-will.

The contrast between the believers in Natural and Imperfect Man is a sharp one, and it has been part of the purpose of *Man and Literature* to dwell on this. How far the contrast holds good of society as a whole it is as yet impossible to say. But if Bennett, Wells, and Co. were representative of their age (and they were), it is probably not untrue to say that Eliot, Faulkner, Kafka, Auden (and Mr Nicholson?) are representative of the main stream of serious thought in regard to Man and society to-day. (If they aren't, who is?) And if this view is tenable it means that many of the more thoughtful non-Christians have much in common with Christians concerning the nature of Man. Naturally, one ought not to generalize too freely about this apparent agreement,

but it is important. It is also to be hoped that those who are facing the fact of sin both in human nature and society will ultimately find the meaning of what, in theological language, we mean by the term Redemption. Some of them have faced the fact of Redemption and have acted accordingly. If the main theme of *Man and Literature* is true, those who hold the "tragic" view of life will find its explanation and solution in the Christian faith. That is why Mr Nicholson's book ends on an optimistic note. The assumptions as to the nature of Man in recent literature indicate not that a spiritual revival is likely to take place in the near future, but that it has already begun.

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Christian Thought in War-time China

The Chinese tradition is essentially practical rather than metaphysical; in consequence Chinese Christians tend to welcome and stress the ethical significance of Christianity and disregard the more dogmatic and theological side of Christian teaching. The Church in China in consequence is spared the Western *odium theologicum*, because for the theologians' dislike of one another's views it has substituted a general dislike for the whole field of theological speculation. To these comments we ought probably to add that all generalizations are false, including this one. Nevertheless a recent book by a Chinese writer on the doctrine of God stands as a rare exception. Where there is theological discussion, it is interesting to notice the time lag from current Western thought, inevitable through the distance and accentuated at present through the blockade. A foreign group in Chungking recently had a long evening's discussion on the relative merits of the doctrine of evolution and the strict Genesis account of creation; a theological college was discussing the now ancient controversy, Jesus or Paul. If such topics now seem a little antiquated as the centre of interest in the West, we might well ask whether the knowledge of current Chinese writing is better informed or more up to date in theological colleges or discussion groups in Britain.

The practical tradition in China inclines more to the study of ethics and of human relationships. In this field planning is the fashion to-day in China, as in the West. Here it is interesting to notice a difference of emphasis in groups on post-war planning in China, compared with the statements emanating from similar groups in America and Britain.

There is relatively less emphasis on international relationships compared with internal problems, and when international questions arise there is a noticeable difference of approach. Elsewhere a central problem is the yielding of national sovereignty before international courts of justice and world-scale organization; when this point is raised in Chinese groups, a Chinese speaker will probably point out that China is still in the process of finding independent sovereignty and

cannot be expected to yield it before it has been found. The rising nationalism found particular expression in the very great welcome given to the abolition of the extra-territoriality treaties. It is seldom pointed out that the inequality of the former treaties was not all to the detriment of China, and that with regard to the ownership of property Britain has given rights to aliens for the last seventy years which were still not given to aliens by Chinese law. In the main, however, China has good grounds for the widespread and deep-rooted suspicion of anything that savours of Western imperialism, and this suspicion colours the approach to any surviving elements of foreign leadership in the church.

In the field of the Christian message on social and economic conditions there is less discussion than might be expected and might indeed be desired. A central issue for Christian thought on post-war reconstruction is the sifting of the communist philosophy and the Russian experiment, so that the orthodox atheism of Marx may be left behind, and the church may be willing to learn from whatever is good in the movements for social and economic reform. In the end China in the East, like Europe in the West, may be a central sphere where these issues must be faced. For the present the very acuteness of the issues tends to drive them underground. Thought may not move too far toward the left without becoming suspect, and for fear of thinking dangerously many prefer not to think at all. It is generally said that in student circles there is an apathy toward social thought or experiment because of this check on liberty. Meanwhile, however, there is plentiful material to occupy the field of economic discussion in the high and ever-rising prices. The price level in parts of China is now 250 times or more the pre-war index. There is need to integrate the two fields of learning, Christian ethic and economic science, over such intensely urgent and practical matters as to how the salaried professions can be kept in existence at all. The issues which occupy the minds of missionaries and teachers are whether, and to what extent, it is legitimate in the present extraordinary circumstances to sell unwanted luxuries at the immense prices prevailing in second-hand shops and to sell foreign currency at black-market rates, in order to have sufficient funds to meet the abnormal costs of all mission and relief work.

For the most part the centre of interest in post-war planning groups is the church itself. Till recently the doctrine of the church and the sense of church membership was weak in Chinese Christian thought. An Indian Christian who visited China said that he thought Chinese leadership was more strongly developed than Indian leadership in the Indian church, but said that he thought the sense of worship and the sense of the church were relatively weak. It is the more interesting and the more important that the church itself is now coming to occupy the centre of attention, and this often in religious circles which might be expected to be weakest in this respect. Four main issues arise here in current discussion. First, there are mission and church relationships and the progressive delegation from mission-centred control to control by the indigenous church. Second, there are church and state relationships. There is no serious controversy here; but there are certain

urgent practical issues, particularly over the registration of churches with the state, and the question how this can be done to establish the churches as legal personalities capable of holding property, while avoiding anything which would inhibit religious liberty. There is then the important question of the recruiting and training of leadership, which is all the more urgent in view of the proper progressive delegation from foreign to Chinese control. The main problem here is that the religious worker as such has had no place of prestige in traditional Chinese society, and that for this reason it is difficult to draw into the ministry those students who are most wanted for their gifts of intellect or leadership. Finally, there are the issues of church unity. In China as elsewhere the war has brought divided denominations closer together in relief and other war-time activities. The causes of division lie far away in Western history; and the divisions seem all the more meaningless to a young and growing church as the possibility of co-operation is discovered. Since loyalty to the church as such is still in any case weak, if Western denominational leaders hold back the younger churches from pioneering the path toward reunion, Chinese Christians may well be tempted to say, You can keep your Western churches, and the Christian movement in the East would then lapse back into a vague diffused ethic. Those who criticize the movements toward union in the younger churches, without themselves having lived in close fellowship within these churches, should ask themselves very seriously whether their judgment is sufficiently well informed to be close to the mind of Christ. There is grave and serious danger, that in our very desire to exalt the church we may in fact altogether abolish the church, if in the post-war years we insist that Christians of the East, who know little and care less for the causes of our Western divisions, shall for ever only know the church in its divided Western form.

G. F. Allen.

Chungking.

CORRESPONDENCE

CONFESSIONAL THEOLOGY AND THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

To the Editor of Theology.

Sir,

May I be permitted to comment upon the very important article by J. H. Jacques in the March issue of Theology? There is, I think, an initial obscurity in it, as the author does not distinguish very clearly between systems of theology and particular confessions which are the product of men trained in these systems. Thomism and the confessional statement of the Church in which Thomism provides the accredited formulation of theology (viz., the Catechism of the Council of Trent) are not the same thing: one can be a Thomist without being pledged to believe, say, in the corporal assumption of our Lady, and one can accept the Tridentine statement of the doctrine of the real

presence without necessarily tying oneself to accept the Thomist language of substance and accidents. Nevertheless Mr Jacques raises for us a quite fundamental question which needs to be answered: Is there in fact an Anglican confession and an Anglican corpus of theology to which we can and ought to return, and which is comparable with those of the Roman, Reformed, and Lutheran Churches? Mr Jacques claims that there is such a confession in the XXXIX Articles and such a corpus of theology in the writings of the Caroline divines. It is on this claim that I wish to comment.

It has often been pointed out that the Anglican Reformation, during its crucial period, had no one dominating theologian whose thought was to prove formative for the Church of England as Luther's and Calvin's did for their churches; and that this has been both a strength and a weakness to the Church of England. It has not been so clearly realized that as a result Anglican theology has been essentially *occasional*. Theologians have spoken because they were moved by the needs of the moment—to meet this attack, to defend that line of action; they have spoken because events themselves have cried aloud for a theological interpretation. Herein, I am convinced, lies the explanation of the Carolines' preoccupation with the theory of the divine right of kings. The prince had wrought his will with the fabric of the national Church, and the theologians were driven back to the Old Testament story of the monarchy and to Romans xiii and our Lord's submission to Pilate to make sense of the events. Even Hooker, most systematic of Anglican theologians, wrote because of the immediate threat of Puritanism. The Anglican theologians of the seventeenth century did not claim to be producing a system comparable with Calvinism. They drew very largely upon Calvin, as they drew upon Aquinas, but their refusal to create a new system midway between the two is very notable. A misleading feature of that otherwise admirable book *Anglicanism*, to which Mr Jacques refers, is that its arrangement suggests the existence of a system which in fact does not exist. The notes at the beginning of the extracts tell us of the human situations which evoked these theological utterances and bear out my claim that they are nearly all occasional writings. Now in this the seventeenth-century Anglicans were strangely close to the biblical temper, for the biblical writers too were driven to speak by events themselves, by the fall of Jerusalem or the death of Christ, by a scandal in the Church or by a miracle of God.

It is, I think, to the temper of the Carolines that we should look, and to their method of approach to their problems, and especially their theological interpretation of events, rather than to their actual formulations. If we try to discover in them a corpus of Anglican orthodoxy we may entirely miss what they have to teach us.

There remain two particular points in Mr Jacques' article which deserve comment:

(1) Not all the Carolines were prepared to be as respectful towards the XXXIX articles as he. Bramhall regarded them as "articles of peace," "pious opinions fitted for the preservation of unity"—*i.e.*, not a statement of Christian belief, but a statement of things about which people agreed not to argue. (*Cf. Anglicanism*, p. 186.)

(2) The *via media* has suffered almost as much misunderstanding from its admirers as from its critics. The former have defended it with a certain complacency as the best possible form of the Christian religion. But in origin the *via media* was a narrow way of suffering and tears, trodden with many misgivings between the rival dogmatisms of Geneva and Rome. The temper of the true *via media* is illustrated in Laud's appeal to Charles I in 1626: "The Church of England is in hard condition. She professeth the ancient Catholic faith, and yet the Romanist condemneth her of novelty in her doctrine. She practises Church government as it hath been in use in all ages and in all places where the Church of Christ hath taken any rooting both in and ever since the apostles' times, and yet the separatist condemns her of anti-christianism in her discipline. The plain truth is, she is between those two factions as between two millstones, and unless your majesty look to it to whose trust she is committed she will be ground to powder, to an irreparable loss and dishonour to this kingdom" (*A Relation of the Conference between William Laud and Mr Fisher the Jesuit*, ed. 1901, p. xxvi). This humility is one of the most attractive features of seventeenth-century Anglicanism; for it is a humility which is willing to efface all that is local and particular, and which is willing to be judged by the authority of the Christian tradition. This was finely said by King James I in his apologia to the monarchs of Christendom (see *Anglicanism*, pp. 3-8): "I hope I have fully cleared myself from being an Apostate; and as far from being a heretic as one may be, that believeth the Scriptures, and the three Creeds, and acknowledgeth the first four General Councils. If I be loath to believe too much, especially of novelties, men of greater knowledge may well pity my weakness. But I am sure none will condemn me for a heretic, save such as make the Pope their God. . . . And I will sincerely promise that whenever any point of the Religion I profess should be proved to be new, and not Ancient, Catholic and Apostolic (I mean for matter of faith), I will as soon renounce it . . . that I will never refuse to embrace any opinion in divinity necessary to salvation which the whole Catholic Church with an unanime consent have constantly taught and believed. . . ."

Much Caroline theology is irrelevant to our condition just because it was written in the heat of controversy. We no longer believe the Pope to be anti-Christ, nor every adverb and preposition and article in the Bible to be the dictate of the Spirit (as the high churchman Mark Frank held, *cf. Sermons*, LACT, Vol. I, p. 202); some of us have lost the Caroline horror of the mere word "Transubstantiation," and our theological debate with nonconformists is not much coloured by political fear and dislike. That does not in any way mean we may neglect the Carolines. It means that it is their method and their temper that we most need to study and from which we can learn most. Their appeal to the whole Bible, for instance, in the Sabbath controversy, against the partial interpretation of the Puritans, still awaits analysis; their appeal to the authority of patristic tradition and to reason as aids to interpretation is of prime importance. Only it would be a grave mistake to attempt to compose a confession from the writings of those who deliberately refrained from doing so themselves.

Mr Jacques mentions the appeal made to the seventeenth-century theologians by the fathers of the Oxford Movement. But even critics of the Movement revered the Carolines; and Mr Jacques and I will both agree with one of them, the anonymous reviewer of the first six volumes of the *Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology* in the *Quarterly Review* of March, 1842, that we find in the Carolines: "Sounder principles than prevailed in the last century . . . marks of discretion, temperance, an absence of partial views, renunciation of self as an authority, adherence to primitive antiquity, dislike of needless change, yet willingness to change for good."

I am, etc.,

R. Cant.

Edinburgh.
March, 1944.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Letters of Evelyn Underhill. Edited by Charles Williams. Longmans.

This is a *mélange* of those letters of Miss Underhill which survive. Most of them are on spirituality, but many are on quite different subjects; the collection will therefore appeal to more than one type of reader.

It is probable that most people will come to the book for spiritual instruction, nor will they come in vain; it should, however, be borne in mind that this is a collection of private letters, not a manual of spirituality. It is true that, if a writer is consistent, the principles of his thought and practice will emerge even in his correspondence; nevertheless, letters are intended for the persons to whom they are addressed for the solution of their own problems, with no thought of general publication.

Particularly is this the case here. These are letters written *currente calamo*, generally in response to an inquiry, though often in connected series; they are intensely personal and practical documents, advising on the needs of the moment, and for the most part addressed to people whose way is that of affective prayer.

A great deal of the advice here given is marked by wisdom and commonsense, with a strong sense of circumstance. The later letters owe something to Dom John Chapman and very much to von Hügel, but throughout Miss Underhill relies chiefly on her own experience; indeed it is noticeable that, in spite of her authentic knowledge of mystical literature, she uses the works of the great spiritual authors rather as a garden from which to cull "nice bits" than as a solid body of teaching to be applied to the training of souls. For this reason her usefulness is restricted to those whose way is similar to her own, and we miss the intuitive understanding of all sorts of God-driven souls which is characteristic of the greatest spiritual guides. This may, of course, be accounted for by the circumstance that all her correspondents happen to be more or less of the same type; but the fact remains.

No two souls, however, are exactly the same. This is a fact which Miss Underhill fully recognizes; unlike many spiritual guides, she has a holy horror of interfering with the operation of the Holy Ghost and seeks to enable the individual to follow the way to which she is called and the movings of the Holy Ghost as they occur rather than to impose her own ideas upon her. This is as it should be, but there is some danger of going to the other extreme, and in some cases she appears to be too subjective and to miss opportunities of pointing out things which are beyond the sight of the "patient" but not, we hope, beyond her own.

To many readers, however, the primary interest of the book will lie in a different direction. Students of Miss Underhill's books are conscious of a considerable development in her mind and soul between the early *Mysticism* and *Mystic Way* and her later writings but are unable to see clearly what it was; in the more autobiographical of these letters her spiritual Odyssey is revealed, and it is a voyage of great interest.

It is sad that the correspondence with von Hügel (except for two or three specimens amongst his own *Letters*) has perished. He was Miss Underhill's friend and counsellor for many years and had more to do with the formation of her soul than any other person, and it is a matter for regret that we have no records of her needs and his guidance, especially as it is difficult to resist the conclusion that, in one important matter at least, she must have misunderstood him, with unfortunate consequences to her own teaching. Apart from this serious loss, the letters, aided by Mr Williams' Introduction, tell their own story, with some *lacunae* indeed, but with great clarity.

To some minds the predominant interest of the letters of a public person is the insight they give into private life and character, and there is much here to satisfy such amiable curiosity: touristy letters, descriptions of people and pictures, letters to, from and about cats, even a love letter or two, reveal the woman as she was, and we see her as an expert yachtswoman and devoted wife and learn that she loved cats and liked purple curtains in her dining-room.

The selection of private letters for publication is a delicate task, and no two people would probably agree as to its just limits, the one person who should be consulted being no longer in a position to give a decision. One may perhaps be permitted to wonder whether Miss Underhill herself would have approved of the publication of quite all her letters; the first one of the series in particular seems to expose to the vulgar gaze an intimacy which should rather be a secret between the persons concerned, and the writer might have wished to modify or eliminate some of her *obiter dicta* on art and people before submitting her correspondence to the world. However, when all is said and done, this is a book that will give Miss Underhill's many friends and disciples much pleasure and no little profit.

F. P. Harton.

Baulking.

The Alphabet of Holiness. By W. H. G. Holmes. Mowbrays. 4s. 6d.

New Testament Readings on the Blessed Sacrament. By G. Sampson, C.R. Mowbrays. 1s. 9d.

These are two small books for devotional reading. Fr Holmes' book on Psalm cxix is designed to suggest to "those who use this Psalm in retreats and quiet days and at other times, ways in which its words may be charged with Christian aspiration and prayer" (p. 12). The titles of a few of his chapters will indicate his treatment of the psalm—The Blessedness of God and the Blessedness of Man, The Word, The Life-giving Spirit, Joy, and Perseverance. Much of it reads like instructions given to religious, particularly the chapter entitled Liberty, over half of which deals directly with the life of the counsels. Fr Sampson takes thirty-five short texts from the New Testament, draws out their meaning and then—often somewhat fancifully—links them on to reflections about the Blessed Sacrament.

Whenever we read the Bible, its words not only have for us their original meaning, but they also carry "overtones" of association, derived from our own experience and also from the religious tradition in which we have been brought up. Both of these books deal more with the associated "overtones" than with the original melody of Scripture. This method is of real value, but it needs careful watching, or it may, if pressed too far, have unfortunate consequences. First, it may fall back on dubious exegesis. For example, Fr Holmes (p. 12) seems to try to get round the "sole word of hatred" in Psalm cxix by preferring the Authorized Version of ver. 113, "I hate vain thoughts," to the Prayer Book version, "I hate them that imagine vain thoughts," but the meaning of the original is almost certainly, "Double-minded ones do I hate." Again, Fr Sampson is hazardous enough to argue from St Mark iv, 34 ("privately to his own disciples he expounded all things") thus: "The Catholic doctrine of the Sacraments, the Holy Mass, Episcopacy, Holy Orders. . . . We must believe that they formed part of all those things which our Lord privately expounded to His own apostles" (p. 22). Secondly, it obscures the true relation of Holy Scripture to devotion: we ought not in our meditations to weave non-biblical ideas into the words of Scripture and then half-consciously claim for these ideas biblical authority; but rather we ought to find the source and the test of our devotional conceptions in biblical thought. Fr Thornton, in his recent book *The Common Life in the Body of Christ* has written of the true relation of Scripture to theology: "The true safeguard lies in the constant submission of theology to the judgement of Scripture, as theories are subject to the judgement of facts." This principle equally applies to devotion; and it is more on these lines that new devotional books are needed.

S. M. Gibbard, S.S.J.E.

Oxford.

A Pilgrim's Further Progress: Dialogues on Christian Teaching. By C. J. Cadoux. Blackwell. 10s. 6d.

By Faith Alone. By H. F. Lovell Cocks. James Clarke. 10s. 6d.

Dr Cadoux' book is a lucid and charitable exposition of, and apologia for, the Liberal Protestant interpretation of the Christian religion. Liberals themselves will welcome such an admirably clear and intelligent statement of their case; those who are not Liberals will be glad to see the very best that can be said for that with which they disagree, and may perhaps be suitably chastened by the urbane skill with which the author puts his finger on some of the weak spots in their arguments. He writes a little sadly, for he knows that Liberalism is under a cloud, and he views with some apprehension the rising tide of Protestant orthodoxy. It is hardly necessary to attempt either to summarize or to refute his beliefs and disbeliefs, for the Liberal creed is sufficiently familiar already, and a catechism child of twelve could see the differences between it and the traditional faith of the majority of Christians. It is much more important that those of us who disagree with Dr Cadoux should try to see what Liberalism has to teach us, rather than affect to despise it as an aberration, or abuse it as the source of all our ills. To the present reviewer this book makes it clear that Liberalism has at least asked two major questions, and tried to answer them. The fact that its answers do not satisfy all of us should not make us shelve the questions, but rather make us seek better answers. The first is concerned with the problem of history in the gospels. Dr Cadoux is entirely right in his insistence upon the prime importance of discovering the Jesus of history in the gospel record, and upon the need in this quest for the particular discipline of New Testament criticism, and upon the need for measuring all doctrinal formulation by what the gospels have to say about the person, teaching and works of Jesus. But he does not sufficiently allow for the extent to which the events of the gospel story themselves are impregnated with theology, and assumes too easily that, because it is possible sometimes by using critical methods to disentangle the plain unadorned history from the interpretation put upon it by the Church, it is possible to do this always, and that the interpretation is always a falsification or at least an obscuring of the truth. Dr Cadoux is a little old-fashioned in his suspicion that the Jesus of history and the Christ of the creeds are two different people. The whole problem of "history-and-interpretation" in the gospels is bigger and more complex than Dr Cadoux would have us understand. Secondly, Liberalism, like medieval Catholicism, has made a brave attempt to express the relations between theology, philosophy and science. How to take the biblical revelation seriously, and to find a place for the natural man, how to relate the scientist's search for truth to the theologian's being possessed by the truth, form one of the most difficult problems of theology to-day; and, so far, biblical theologians do not seem to have tackled it. Dr Cadoux' answers to both these questions are unacceptable because they do not take account of all the evidence; nevertheless his Liberalism has done service in asking the questions.

With Dr Lovell Cocks we enter the very different world, of which

Dr Cadoux so strongly disapproves, of Reformation theology, a world in which the influence of Barth and Kierkegaard stalks large. The book is hard reading, the style obscure, the language needlessly difficult, and the subject itself, its method of treatment and the theological idiom employed, are all rather foreign to Anglican ways of thinking. The author sets out to answer one specific question, *What is saving faith?* He first examines the "humanist" theories of faith expressed in terms of philosophy or psychology (under which head he would presumably class Dr Cadoux' definition of faith as "simple trust or reliance") and proclaims, rather than demonstrates, their inadequacy. The second and more interesting part of the book is an exposition of saving faith in biblical terms. And here, however much one may disagree with the author on particular points, one is always aware that he is genuinely thinking and writing in terms of biblical theology and of a disciplined dogmatic system. Human faith, just because it responds to the divine initiative, is conformed to the living Word it acknowledges in an experience which does not lie open to psychological investigation. Only the believer can say what faith is, and all that he can say is that it is hearing the Word of God and obeying it. Faith, therefore, is *analogia Verbi*, the analogue of the divine act of revelation. The author helps us to see something of the profundity and subtlety of this great Protestant doctrine of justification by faith and of its all-embracing scope in Protestant dogmatics. The reviewer is not convinced by the argument that what Luther and Barth have said about it is really what St Paul meant by his language about the indwelling of Christ; and he would have been grateful if Dr Lovell Cocks had (*a*) given a reasoned criticism of the ordinary teaching of Catholic ascetic theology on faith as an infused virtue, (*b*) related the doctrine to the Sacraments.

It will be a useful discipline for any Anglican who still believes that Protestantism is a word with only one meaning to read these two Protestant books carefully. They are worth reading for other reasons. The first may come to have considerable value as a compendium of Liberal beliefs and disbeliefs; and the second, standing in the authentic tradition of Reformation theology, may provoke an Anglican theologian to write a book on this subject which Anglicans have so consistently refused to take seriously.

R. Cant.

Edinburgh.

The Abolition of Man. By C. S. Lewis. Oxford University Press. 2s. 6d.

In giving the Riddell Memorial Lectures in the University of Durham, Mr C. S. Lewis offered what he calls in his sub-title "Reflections on Education with special reference to the teaching of English in the Upper Forms of Schools," and it is perfectly true that that is his topic, for he begins and ends with a criticism of a couple of books in which certain schoolmasters teach the art of "debunking." Mr Lewis deals very faithfully with them, showing that the mere destructive criticism of descriptive passages which must not be taken literally has

very little to do with the teaching of English, and would, indeed, destroy very much of what is great in literature. His satire is urbane, generous, and decisive, and his many admirers will find these lectures, though in a sense academic, quite as readable as his other well-known books. But they will find more than an essay upon the teaching of English, and indeed that is not the main purpose which Mr Lewis has in view. He is really concerned with the vindication of the Natural Law, not as demonstrable but as absolute, standing in its own right. "You cannot go on 'seeing through' things for ever. The whole point of seeing through something is to see something through it. . . . It is no use trying to see through first principles. If you see through everything then everything is transparent. But a wholly transparent world is an invisible world. To 'see through' all things is the same as not to see."

The apologetic in this is plain, though Mr Lewis is careful to let his readers make the point for themselves. And therewith he makes another point, this time explicit. If all our education is to be a system of "conditioning" and science holds out the hope that man can be wholly bent to any purpose that the "Conditioners" require, what is to determine the Conditioners themselves? It is Karl Mannheim's problem over again. Who shall plan the Planners? Mannheim found no solution. Mr Lewis shows, paradoxically and shrewdly enough, that the only end is the abolition of man. For if no other principle can be found Nature must needs return, and all that is characteristically human must perish. And so, once more, we must needs "see through" this business of scientific conditioning. This done, we find no mere empty transparency, but the *Tao*, the Way, the Natural Law.

L. W. Grensted.

Oxford.

SHORTER NOTICES

A Short History of the Jewish People. By Cecil Roth. The East and West Library. 5s. 6d.

The Jewish Contribution to Civilization. By Cecil Roth. The East and West Library. 5s. 6d.

Towards Historic Judaism. By E. Berkovits. East and West Library. 5s.

Our Friends the Jews. By Arthur Day. Burns Oates and Washbourne. 3s. 6d.

Dr Roth covers a period of over three thousand years in two volumes of 447 and 369 pages, which are nevertheless of a small and handy size. He marshals his encyclopedic accumulation of facts and names with a lucid arrangement and a lively style. Of course, when one crowds a content of such diversity and richness in a short record, it is almost impossible not to be superficial, and Dr Roth has not always been able to avoid that danger. *A Short History of the Jewish People* is the new edition (1942) of a text first published in 1935 and now brought down to the outbreak of the European War in September, 1939. It

starts with the birth of the Hebrew people. In dealing with the biblical age the author has made what he calls "the innovation of adhering in general outline to the traditional account," though neglecting the miraculous element; he thinks that "higher criticism" has thus far failed to provide any alternative account which commands universal acceptance and that archæological opinion on the whole favours the traditional story. The life and teaching of Jesus are dealt with in 42 lines: "he copied and elaborated the teachings of contemporary rabbis . . . he presented them, however, in a new fashion." While most works of this kind insist on the record of German and Slavonic Jewries, Dr Roth puts a somewhat fresh emphasis on Jewish life in the East. *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization* (1943) was first published in 1938; it gives an impressive list (including converts) of Jewish names famous in letters, art, music, stage, science, medicine, philosophy, politics, economics, and philanthropy; this last chapter is especially interesting and shows how much a small and persecuted race has done for mankind. The name of M. Buber is strangely absent from the two books.

E. Berkovits' book is an answer to the "crying need for a great spiritual revival of Judaism." In 144 pages the author analyses the disintegration of the life of the modern Jew and advocates the healing of the breach between Torah and life by the rediscovery of historic religious Judaism (Bible and Talmud). He suggests a reorganization of community and synagogue, rabbinical authority and Jewish education, along lines contrary to Modernism but which do not imply a sectarian Orthodoxy. National restoration in Palestine must coincide with a new world of justice and lasting peace. In the meantime the Jews must "put their own house in order" and "bring about the spiritual regeneration of Judaism as far as possible in the present abnormal circumstances."

Father Day is a Jesuit who, even in his boyhood, felt strangely drawn to the Hebrew people and gathers together the memories of many years of work among them. He touches with light and sympathetic fingers the difficulties and problems which confront a Christian work among the Jews. The way in which he deals with the painful story of Hans Herzl (strangely contrasting with his unjust judgment on A. Pallière) shows a spirit of deep and wide Christian sympathy. These 80 pages of personal recollections close with this characteristic sentence: "May the Ivrim and the Nozrim—Hebrews and Nazarenes—meet midway, join hands and greet the dawning of a happier Era. Shalom! Pax super Israel! Amen. Alleluiah."

LEV GILLET.

LONDON.

Lenten Courses. By the Bishop of Exeter. S.P.C.K. 2s.

Dr Curzon in this book gives outlines for five Lent Courses of six sermons. Their value is by no means limited to use by the clergy. Many of the laity would find very useful help for private meditations. As ground plans for courses of sermons they are admirable.

Only a bare outline of each sermon is given, and certainly the book will not save preachers trouble; rather will it give hard-pressed parish clergy material from which to work up their own sermons.

The forms of service printed at the end of the volume one hopes are or will be printed separately. Their value would be greatly increased if every member of the congregation could have a copy to follow.

R. C. WAINWRIGHT.

WOODCHURCH.

The Sunday Epistles. By J. H. Ward. Mowbray. 2s. 6d.

Mr Ward in this book takes the epistle for each Sunday and gives notes on it to be worked up into sermons. The book should be useful to those of the clergy who have to preach Sunday by Sunday at a sung Eucharist. Many of the outlines for a Sunday would form more than one sermon, and one is led to believe that the author has meditated on the same passage often and combined the result of his meditations in one outline. The book should be also useful to the laity who have not a great deal of time for Bible reading. If they take the epistle as their passage for the week, they will find in this book just the help they need to give them a point from which to start their own thinking. Altogether a very useful little book at a reasonable price.

R. C. WAINWRIGHT.

WOODCHURCH.

Lent and Eastertide with the Liturgy. By Bede Frost. Mowbray. 6s. 6d.

It will be as well to make clear at the start that by the Liturgy the author means the Proper of the Masses of Lent and Eastertide according to the Roman Liturgy. Thus to profit by the first part of the book a translation of the Roman Liturgy will be a help. As one would expect, there is a mass of helpful devotional thought packed into a small compass. The book contains a brief account of the Holy Week and Easter ceremonies which might with profit have been longer. The most valuable part of the book is that dealing with Eastertide. Here the author leaves the Proper of the Masses and deals with the fact of Easter and its implications and consequences. Fr Bede Frost has here material which he uses admirably, and a careful reading of the latter part of the book will help to deepen the grasp of the fact of Easter and its meaning. It is very useful to have in one book spiritual reading for Lent and Easter, and it may well cause a good habit begun for Lent to be carried on afterwards. It remains to say that the book is not beyond the capacity of most people.

R. C. WAINWRIGHT.

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